

RAPID RE-HOUSING FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES (RRHF) PILOT IN KING COUNTY

The Rapid Re-Housing for Families (RRHF) Pilot launched in November 2013. The pilot's goals are to reduce the length of time families experience homelessness and to expand rapid re-housing, enhancing housing options for homeless families. The pilot serves families in King County and is slated to end in December 2014. However, our community is examining how to sustain and expand rapid re-housing efforts and will look to the outcomes of this pilot to support those efforts.

Rapid re-housing has shown impressive outcomes nationally and is designed to transition families experiencing homelessness into permanent housing quickly by offering:

- Short-Term Rental and Move-In Assistance
- Housing Search and Stabilization Services
- Individualized Employment Assistance

Additional information and resources about the promising evidence of rapid re-housing can be found on the reverse.

Rapid Re-Housing for Families in King County

Referral and Eligibility

Family Housing Connection (FHC) refers families primarily from shelter to the RRHF Pilot. We are utilizing this pilot as an opportunity to better understand the characteristics of families that do well with this approach, therefore we did not want to limit who could be eligible. (The pilot is also testing strategies to support families who are enrolled in the pilot that may need greater levels of assistance. See below.) Families with a Family Housing Connection Housing Barrier score of '1' at time of assessment are eligible for the pilot (regardless of income and legal status).

The pilot is also utilizing this opportunity to better understand the effectiveness of the scoring tool used at FHC by tracking any additional housing-related barriers that become known after a referral is made. While providers are asked to indicate these additional barriers in a newly created assessment in Safe Harbors (for pilot programs only), all providers will continue to work with those families regardless of the additional barriers assessed.

Employment and Housing Search

RRHF providers and Employment Navigators are asked to begin working with families quickly (with a goal of meeting with families within 72 hours after a referral is received). There is a strong emphasis on the need to move quickly and work intensely on increasing income and addressing barriers to housing from the start of enrollment in the pilot. Much of this work will occur while the family remains in shelter. As of March, we are beginning to examine the length of time it takes families to move into housing and anticipate it may be very different for each family.

Both Employment Navigators and Housing Providers have flexible client assistance funds to assist families in reducing barriers to both attaining employment and housing, to include paying back substantial rent arrears, utility debt, transportation assistance, and training/certification fees.

Move-In and Rental Assistance

RRHF providers can also assist families with moving costs, including application fees and security deposits. Families can receive three months of graduated rental assistance. Utilizing a progressive engagement approach, additional assistance can be provided and is based on need.

Assistance is flexible and individualized. Families are included in the goal setting and planning process. Families help determine how much rental assistance would support their housing and living costs and are asked what they think they need to sustain their housing. Rather than providing fixed assistance, providers can individualize their assistance within the overall rental assistance guidelines. Providers also work with each family to identify other needs and resources in the

community that can support families in maintaining housing. These efforts are intended to build up the natural supports families can reach out to in their own communities.

After a family exits the pilot program, families can contact their provider if emergencies arise. Providers can offer limited assistance for up to six months after program exit. This does not count as a return to homelessness and is intended to further support housing stabilization. Employment Navigators can remain engaged with families for up to two years after enrollment.

We are also working to develop a transfer policy for families who appear to need greater levels of support and assistance than the RRHF Pilot can provide. We believe that this will be an exception for a small number of families in the pilot. Our intent is to connect them with more appropriate levels of assistance (as opposed to re-experiencing homelessness). Ideally, those families would not need to relocate and would be able to remain in their housing as resources shift to serve them in place.

Commitment to Learning

The pilot has a rigorous evaluation process that includes better understanding for whom this model works and what parts of the model are most effective. Data is tracked in Safe Harbors and is reviewed on a regular basis. Pilot providers, Employment Navigators and funders come together on a monthly basis to discuss challenges and lessons learned. This Learning Circle incorporates the early outcomes measured in Safe Harbors, as well as the provider experiences to inform the implementation and refinement of services.

Rapid Re-Housing & Employment Navigator Partners

RRHF Providers	Employment Navigators*
➤ Catholic Community Services	➤ Neighborhood House
➤ Neighborhood House	
➤ Wellspring Family Services	➤ Career Connections
➤ Solid Ground	
➤ YWCA	➤ YWCA Works
➤ DAWN	

*Employment Navigators partner with their designated RRHF provider

Additionally, the pilot works with other essential partners in the community, including emergency shelters, DSHS, education and McKinney Vento staff, and workforce providers.

RRHF Pilot Funding Partners

Building Changes	City of Seattle Human Services Dep't
King County Dep't of Community Services	King County Housing Authority
Seattle Housing Authority	United Way of King County

Additional Information and Resources

- **Building Changes, What is Rapid Re-Housing?** (www.buildingchanges.org/library-type/other/item/628-what-is-rapid-re-housing)
- **National Alliance to End Homelessness, Rapid Re-Housing Resources** (www.endhomelessness.org/pages/prevention-and-rapid-re-housing)
- **Katharine Gale – RRH, Transitional Housing Conversion & Rental Assistance** (<http://www.kingcounty.gov/socialservices/Housing/ServicesAndPrograms/Programs/Homeless/HomelessFamilies/Materials.aspx>)
- **Kathie Barkow – Why RRH Matters to the Community and My Organization** (<http://www.buildingchanges.org/library-type/other/item/658-why-rapid-re-housing-matters-to-the-community-and-my-organization>)
- **Housing Focused Services I & II Webinars** – FHI Moving Home Academy (<http://www.kingcounty.gov/socialservices/Housing/ServicesAndPrograms/Programs/Homeless/HomelessFamilies/Materials.aspx>)
- **Rapid Re-Housing for Families Press Release** (<http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/news/release/2013/December/RapidRehousing.aspx>)